

A Virtuous Warrior in a Savage World

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I. Introduction#

Divining the nature of future war is always problematic.¹ President Eisenhower warned that “Every war is going to astonish you in the way it has occurred, and in the way it is carried out.”² The United States must, of course, be prepared to meet a wide range of contingencies. Paramount among them would be a threat posed by a “peer competitor,” that is, a state capable of battling the United States with comparable forces employing largely orthodox tactics. Although it is almost certain that one will arise in the future, no nation exists today that can challenge America *symmetrically* as a peer competitor would.

In the meantime, it seems prudent to focus on more immediate near-term threats. These include regional adversaries and other kinds of opponents with limited objectives. Some of them may try to offset American power by conducting a brutal campaign of savagery and intimidation I call “neo-absolutist” war. This paper will explore how and why a postmodern “Genghis Khan” might pursue such a strategy, and, even more importantly, explain what a “virtuous warrior,” the Sir Galahad^{#3} of tomorrow’s conflicts, might do to meet that challenge.

Asymmetrical Warfare

Judging from its defense literature, the United States recognizes that new kinds of threats are emerging. A myriad of documents are replete with warnings about foes who will try to engage it asymmetrically.[#] In broad terms, “*asymmetrical*”⁴ warfare describes strategies that seek to avoid an opponent’s strengths; it is an approach that focuses whatever may be one sides comparative advantages against their enemy’s relative weaknesses.^{#5} In a way, seeking asymmetries is fundamental to all warfighting. But, in the modern context, asymmetrical warfare emphasizes what are popularly perceived as unconventional or nontraditional methodologies.

For most potential adversaries, attacking the United States asymmetrically is the only reasonable warfighting strategy. The Gulf War was an object lesson to military planners around the globe of the futility of attempting to oppose America in any other fashion. Moreover, symmetrical, high-tech war against the United States military would present enormous training, logistical, and resource requirements to whomever might attempt it, and today these are “demands that few societies can meet.”⁶

The Technological Focus

In the United States, asymmetrical warfare is frequently conceived in technological terms. *Joint Vision 2010*, the “operationally based template”⁷ as to how America will fight future wars, states that “[o]ur *most vexing* future adversary may be one who can use technology to make rapid improvements in its military capabilities that provide asymmetrical counters to US military strengths....”⁸ [emphasis added] Consistent with that analysis, weapons of mass destruction and information warfare are often proffered as illustrations of the asymmetrical warfare genre.^{#9}

Focusing on technology is characteristically American. Historians Allan R. Millett and Peter Maslowski declare that since the mid-nineteenth century (but particularly in the twentieth century) the United States has relied upon “increasingly sophisticated technology to overcome logistical limitations—and to match enemy numbers with firepower.”^{#10} Our fixation on technology continues today. *Joint Vision 2010*, for example, centers on the question of how to “leverage technological opportunities to achieve new levels of effectiveness in joint warfighting.”¹¹

Accordingly, the U.S. military is an enthusiastic disciple of the much-ballyhooed Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA). The RMA seeks to produce radically more effective militaries through the widespread application of emerging technologies, especially advanced computer and communications systems.^{#12} Much of the new weaponry, however, seems optimized for high-tech, peer-competitor war. In other words, it is aimed principally at a form of warfare that is *symmetrical* as opposed to the far more likely challenge of a regional opponent who wages war *asymmetrically*.

Despite the experience of Vietnam, Somalia, and elsewhere where technically-inferior foes triumphed, Americans are still disposed to see all difficulties—even the complex challenge of war—as technical problems subject to engineered solutions.^{#13} But consideration of war as a technological or engineering problem is a dubious proposition. The engineer’s culture is an “aggressively rational one” where technical problems are solved with a logical application of scientific principles.”^{#14} War, however, is something different. Marine Lt General Paul K. Van Riper explains:

Technology permeates every aspect of war, but the science of war cannot account for the dynamic interaction of the physical and moral elements that come into play, by design or by chance, in combat. War will remain predominately an art, infused with human will, creativity, and judgment.^{#15}

Neo-Absolutist War

This essay argues that the asymmetries that the U.S. military will find “most vexing” are based not on technology, but on psychology. It contends that many future opponents will accept that they cannot match the quality or quantity of the American military machine and will instead aim to wage what might be characterized as “neo-absolutist war.” Neo-absolutist war is war without rules or scruples. It is a vicious, strategically-oriented form of conflict that extends across the spectrum of warfare. It differs from more traditional “total war” by, among other things, the propensity of the aggressor to focus not on destroying military forces, but rather on shattering the opponent’s will *by any means possible*, including methods that defy recognized standards of acceptable behavior in war.

Those who wage neo-absolutist war clearly understand that while war presents technical problems, it is not itself one. Like General Van Riper, they see it as a contest of human wills that transcends the logic of the physical sciences. But unlike General Van Riper and others steeped in the mores of international law, they do not feel bound by such norms. Their attitude might be described by reference to popular depictions of the ruthlessness of the Mongol conqueror, Genghis Khan. Just as he savagely massacred the “population of one city in order to persuade others to surrender without a fight,”^{#16} adherents of neo-absolutist war would not hesitate to use brutality and atrocity as deliberate military strategies, especially if they allow them to avoid decisive, force-on-force collisions with the U.S. armed forces.

Although American military leaders cannot resort to the tactics of neo-absolutist war, they must nevertheless be prepared to deal with those that do. Accordingly, this article will grapple with how best to prepare to prevail in such difficult circumstances while at the same time remaining true to the ideals of the virtuous warrior. It will not enumerate the many strategies that might be used to avoid such conflicts altogether. Rather, this effort will try to identify pragmatic considerations for U.S. military leaders already engaged with a neo-absolutist opponent. In short, it will attempt to provide guidance for the inevitable time when the virtuous warrior, the Sir Galahad model, meets the next Genghis Khan.

II. The Face of Future War

The U.S. armed forces traditionally analyze war in Clausewitzian terms, viewing it as a violent extension of a Westernized notion of politics. But this paradigm is now under siege. In his 1993 book, *The History of Warfare*, the eminent military historian John Keegan deconstructs the Clausewitzian thesis on a number of points, including the fact that war existed prior to what is known today as “politics.” #Keegan contends that war is rooted

in culture, not politics.¹⁷ Complementing Keegan's proposition is that of Harvard political scientist, Samuel P. Huntington.

Clash of Civilizations

In a seminal (and much-debated) article first published in 1993 and expanded into a book in 1996, Huntington argued that future conflicts will likely be clashes between civilizations with fundamentally different psychological orientations and value sets than those of the West. Huntington maintains that ideas such as "individualism, liberalism, constitutionalism, human rights, equality, liberty, the rule of law, democracy, free markets, [and] the separation of church and state" define the West.¹⁸ What is important about Huntington's work is that he reminds us that the rest of the world does not necessarily share these values. Thus, no one should expect that they will think the same way as Americans about many subjects, including war. Just this past year, Lt General Li Jijuan of the Chinese People's Liberation Army, observed that "[e]ach civilization has its own notion of war which cannot help but be influenced by its cultural background."¹⁹

The New Warrior Class

Future conflicts, therefore, may well be clashes between civilizations whose moral, political, and cultural norms differ markedly from those of the United States. Within some of these civilizations another disturbing phenomena is brewing, one with major implications for the United States military. It is described in a fascinating piece by Ralph Peters, then an Army major, which appeared in the summer, 1994, issue of *Parameters*. In it, Peters delineated what he calls "The New Warrior Class," a multitude which he contends "already numbers in the millions." Peters says that in the future:

[America] will face [warriors] who have acquired a taste for killing, who do not behave rationally according to our definition of rationality, who are capable of atrocities that challenge the descriptive powers of language, and who will sacrifice their own kind in order to survive.^{#20}

Along similar lines Professor Keegan observes that the post-Cold War world is experiencing in Chechnya, Afghanistan, Somalia, central Asia and elsewhere the re-emergence of "warrior" societies. These are peoples, he says, that are psychologically distinct from the West, and whose young are "brought up to fight, think fighting honorable and think killing in warfare glorious." A warrior in such societies, Keegan wrote in 1995, "prefers death to dishonor and kills without pity when he gets the chance."²¹

The Warrior Code of Honor

It is tempting, but profoundly erroneous, to over-generalize about these groups by concluding that they are wholly morally depraved. Certainly some members of their warrior castes are simply evil human beings. However, as Michael Ignatieff points out, warrior codes of honor, though they vary, exist in virtually every culture and "are among the oldest features of human morality."^{#22} While such codes frequently provide similar sets of moral etiquette with respect to the conduct of war, they "appl[y] only to certain people, not others."^{#23} Ignatieff further explains by noting that "[w]e in the West start from a universalist ethic based on ideas of human rights; they start from particularist ethics that define the tribe, the nation, or ethnicity *as the limit of moral concern*."^{#24} [emphasis added] Thus, even otherwise virtuous societies (or an analog described by one analyst as "streetfighter" nations)^{25#} may nevertheless participate in appalling (to us) behavior because they deem those they victimize as being outside their favored group and, hence, unworthy of humane treatment.

Ignatieff concedes that the disintegration of states in recent years often carries with it the destruction of "the indigenous warrior codes that sometimes keep war this side of bestiality."^{#26} In any event, military leaders may find themselves confronting opponents—irregulars, terrorists, or even transnational criminal organizations, for example—that do not have, and never have had, *any* moral anchor in a warrior's code of honor. What is important,

however, is to understand the potential military ramifications of fighting adversaries with differing legal, cultural, or moral norms.

For instance, some adversaries may see these differences as a source of strength *vis-à-vis* the United States. Major General Robert H. Scales, Jr., the Commandant of the Army War College, argues that in future conflicts an enemy may perceive his comparative advantage against the United States in the “collective psyche and will of his people.”^{#27} In turn, this generates an obvious question, i.e., how will an enemy attack America’s psyche and will? The answer makes Americans and others in the West uncomfortable because it raises the specter that basic Western values, the very things Huntington sees as defining the West, are in fact the asymmetries that future adversaries will most probably exploit.

III. Value-Based Asymmetrical Strategy

The United States has already seen how an enemy can carry out a value-based asymmetrical strategy. For example, one of the things that America’s enemies have learned in the latter half of the 20th century is to manipulate democratic values. Consider the remarks of a former North Vietnamese commander: “The conscience of America was part of its war-making capability, and we were turning that power in our favor. America lost because of its democracy; through dissent and protest it lost the ability to mobilize a will to win.”^{#28} By stirring up dissension in the United States, the North Vietnamese were able to advance their strategic goal of removing American power from Southeast Asia. Democracies are less-resistant to political machinations of this sort than are the totalitarian systems common to neo-absolutists.

Exploiting the Casualty-Aversion Phenomenon

Other elements of America’s value system may likewise be vulnerable. Two related aspects of post-Vietnam and post-Gulf War America are illustrations. The first is the growing aversion in both the electorate and in the uniformed ranks towards incurring virtually *any* friendly casualties in most military operations.^{#29} Consider that the deaths of 18 Rangers during a mission in Somalia in October 1993 were enough to derail U.S. policy there, even though from a purely *military* standpoint the raid achieved its objectives and the U.S. losses were minuscule compared with those of the enemy.^{#30}

What proved to be particularly effective, however, was the barbaric treatment of the body of a United States soldier. The widely-televised images of it being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu helped destroy the public support that the U.S. military needed to succeed in Somalia. Consistent with a neo-absolutist approach, the Somalis made no attempt to hide the savagery of their act. Significantly, because of the success this behavior enjoyed, Americans should expect more of it, especially as new communications technologies greatly enhance the accessibility of international media organizations.³¹

The second aspect, which William Boyne points out “is unusual in history,”³² requires wars to be won with “a minimum number of casualties inflicted on the enemy.”³³ The rapid end to the Gulf War following televised pictures of the so-called “Highway of Death” illustrates the new ethical and political environment. Notably, this can occur even where the enemy losses are inflicted without violating legal or moral norms.

There is another, darker side to the casualty aversion phenomena that may have been inspired by an unintended consequence of the bombing of Baghdad’s Al Firdos bunker during the Gulf War. Unbeknownst to coalition targeteers, that underground command and control facility was also being used to shelter the families of high Iraqi officials. After the devastating attack which destroyed the bunker, pictures of hundreds of bodies of women and children being pulled from the wreckage were broadcast worldwide. This caused U.S. leaders—concerned about adverse public reaction to the noncombatant deaths—to virtually end further raids on the Iraqi capital.^{#34}

Though the decision to forego further operations against Baghdad had little effect on the outcome of the war, the precedent is important. The United States response to the unexpected results of the Al Firdos bombing quite obviously suggests to some opponents a cheap and reliable method of defending against U.S. strikes: cover the target with noncombatants.^{#35}

Exploiting the American Military Ethos

Such unconscionable behavior creates complications for high-minded U.S. forces. As *Joint Vision 2010* asserts, “moral strengths” and “high ethical standards” are central to the American military ethos.^{#36} This fact, however, makes the U.S. military susceptible to tactics that aim to manipulate their innate respect for human life. For instance, Somali warlords used women and children as human shields against coalition forces during the intervention of the early 1990s. Human shield tactics also enabled the Serbs to discourage strikes by U.S. and other NATO planes by the simple expedient of chaining captured UN troops to potential targets.^{#37} Other nations can be similarly affected by the exploitation of noncombatants. During the war in Chechnya, for example, insurgents offset their technological inferiority by threatening civilian hostages which forced the Russians to meet various demands.^{#38}

Several potential adversaries appear prepared to use noncombatants to blunt U.S. power. Libya threatened to surround the reported site of an underground chemical plant with “millions of Muslims” in order to ward off attacks.^{39#} Most recently, when Western military action seemed imminent, Saddam Hussein inundated his palaces and other buildings with noncombatant civilians in order to discourage air strikes by Western forces sensitive to the effect on their publics of civilian deaths, regardless of the circumstances.^{#40}

The upshot is that future enemies may consider humanitarian concern for noncombatants as yet another asymmetry on which they can capitalize in ways Americans consider unthinkable. As already noted, a neo-absolutist will do almost anything if it complicates or adversely affects America’s use of its military strength. Indeed, Analyst James F. Dunnigan cautions that “[i]f the opponents are bloody-minded enough, they will always exploit the humanitarian attitudes of their adversaries.”^{41#}

IV. A Scenario

A fictionalized account of how an adversary might use a range of value-based asymmetries to confront the United States is laid out in the 1996 essay, *How We Lost the High-Tech War of 2007*.⁴² This scenario begins by optimistically assuming that the United States procures and deploys all kinds of high-tech weaponry. It also assumes that methodologies are developed which protect critical American military and economic facilities from physical terrorist attacks as well as cyber-subversion.

With that backdrop, the article recites a tale where a regional adversary, though technologically-inferior, nevertheless seeks to defeat the United States. The enemy relentlessly wages neo-absolutist war and engages in a number of despicable strategies designed to present American forces with legal and moral conundrums. For example, the adversary disperses military assets into civilian areas in the hopes of causing collateral damage that he can trumpet to the world media. He uses human shields and hostages on aircraft and vehicles, and buries military depots under schools, hospitals, and even POW camps, all in the hopes of dissuading attacks by compassionate Americans concerned about the fate of those who might be unintentionally killed.

In order to besiege us emotionally, the enemy tortures women POWs to try to stir up domestic political controversy. He launches computer, economic, and other attacks against less well-defended Mexico in hopes of creating emotionally-charged border problems as refugees surge north. He also diverts attention—and energy—from the area of the conflict by striking the American homeland through the spread of “mad cow” disease in the cattle industry, the release of destructive pests in farm areas, the placement of AIDs-infected needles on beaches, and by the creation of environmental disasters through the scuttling of oil tankers off the coasts. Because vital government and commercial buildings are well-protected, the enemy switches his targets for terrorism to exposed but politically potent communities of elderly people.

Although the opponent in *High-Tech War* possessed a crude nuclear device, he had no means of delivering it against sophisticated U.S. defensive systems. Undeterred, the enemy covertly placed a device in one of his own cities and secretly detonated it to coincide with a conventional U.S. air attack. In the ensuing confusion the enemy makes it appear to the world’s media that it was an American bomb, and that it had been unnecessarily used against them. The enemy succeeds in creating a debilitating international backlash against the U.S. military

effort in the region. The cumulative effect of all of these actions exhausts the U.S.'s energy and determination. America eventually concedes defeat.

Is this scenario outrageous? Of course it is. But as has already been shown, a number of clues that support a conclusion that several potential adversaries apparently are contemplating (or have even employed) one or more of the tactics the article discusses. Moreover, there is every indication that adversaries will continue to do so in the future. How should the virtuous warrior respond to such deliberate savagery?

IV. Pragmatic Considerations

Devising successful strategies against neo-absolutist opponents may be the most difficult challenge facing 21st century military leaders. Make no mistake about it, there is no checklist or sequence of pre-planned steps applicable to every permutation of this kind of antagonist. Military leaders may find themselves battling some opponents who are little more than bands of criminals, while others may be the professional military forces of sovereign states. Each of these foes will require a tailor-made response. Nevertheless, there are some broad considerations that pragmatic military leaders may wish to keep in mind as they develop responses to this new type of war. Specifically:

(a) Get inside your adversary's head.

In order to deal with the Genghis Khans of the world, the virtuous warrior must understand how they think. In the United States military in general, and the Air Force in specific, heavy stress has been placed on discerning an opponent's physical assets in an order of battle sense, that is, counting the number of planes, ships, and tanks and so forth. Capabilities thus represented are important, but in fighting neo-absolutist enemies, it is equally if not more important to understand their intentions, as well as their culture and values. Technical intelligence gathering systems like satellites simply do not tell you all you need to know about foes who do not rely on the physical strengths of their forces for victory.

Accordingly, the virtuous warrior should emphasize human intelligence that provides insight into the mind of the enemy. In addition, more political-military affairs officers skilled in analyzing the thinking of people from societies other than our own are needed. A study released in 1997 by the Air Force Academy's Institute for National Security Studies reveals that "there are serious, long-standing flaws in the way the military services, and the Air Force in particular, provide political-military affairs officers to fill the vital needs that exist."⁴³ Individual officers have a responsibility as well. They must school themselves in the history, politics, economics, sociology, and anthropology of potential opponents. This is a lifetime responsibility that spans all career fields.

All of this information is necessary to overcome what is a critical but common mistake when confronting opponents from other cultures. In particular, Americans persistently seem to assume that other peoples think basically the same as they do. Edward L. Rowney, a retired flag officer and former United States arms control negotiator, commented recently that:

Our biggest mistakes stem from the assumption that others are like us, when in fact, they are more unlike than like us. We insist on ascribing to others our cultural traits, not recognizing that we have different objectives due to our unique historic backgrounds and sets of values. In short, "We fail to place ourselves in the other person's moccasins."⁴⁴

When this obtuseness towards the mindset of our adversaries is allowed to affect military strategies, asymmetries result. H.R. McMaster argues in his book *Dereliction of Duty*, for example, that the graduated application of airpower during the Vietnam War—intended to signal our resolve to support South Vietnam yet do so in a way that the United States believed demonstrated restraint—wholly misperceived North Vietnamese thought processes. McMaster contends:

Graduated pressure was fundamentally flawed—The strategy ignored the uncertainty of what was *the unpredictable psychology of an activity that involves killing, death, and destruction*. To the North Vietnamese, military action, involving as it did attacks on their forces and bombing their territory, was not simply a means of communication. Human sacrifice in war evokes strong emotions creating a dynamic that defies systems analysis quantification.⁴⁵ [emphasis added]

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Analogously, Americans often seem to take for granted that other cultures share their preoccupation with money matters. They think that adversaries will engage in the same sort of cost-benefit approach to issues that they often do. In reality, ideological, ethnic, religious, and other imperatives may subordinate financial considerations in a given situation. This is one reason that economic sanctions are so seldom effective. Although from the U.S. perspective intransigence in the face of economic collapse seems nonsensical, such conclusions only illustrate ignorance of the motivations of those from societies different from the U.S.

Misreading what motivates others can be costly. During the Somalia operation a \$25,000 reward was announced for the capture of Mohamed Farah Aideed on the allegation that he was behind attacks on UN peacekeepers in June of 1993. Not only was it utterly unsuccessful, it led to further intransigence by Aideed and his supporters.⁴⁶# What might have worked in the Somalia effort, a classic example of a warrior society willing to engage in neo-absolutist war, is a more strategic approach.

(b) Think strategically.

Thinking strategically is vital to any military operation, but especially when it involves a belligerent waging neo-absolutist war. Regrettably, strategic thinking appears to have, in the words of renowned RAND analyst Carl Builder, “gone into hiding” in the U.S. military—overwhelmed it seems by tactical and operational orientations#. ⁴⁷ Builder sees strategic thinking as incorporating the “grand idea that military power can sometimes be brought to bear most effectively and efficiently when it is applied directly towards a nation’s highest purposes without first defeating defending enemy forces.” Parenthetically, it is somewhat ironic that the strategic flame has dimmed in the Air Force as it was the concept of strategic bombing—not air superiority or close air support—that justified, and continues to justify, the Air Force’s separate existence as an independent service. #⁴⁸

Achieving national objectives without defeating enemy forces is exceptionally attractive when confronting a neo-absolutist foe. It denies him the opportunity to effectively close with U.S. forces where he can cause the bloodshed—or the threat of bloodshed—that so often serves his purposes. Importantly, not all strategic applications of military power necessarily involve the use of force. The 1948 Berlin airlift serves as a model. By blockading the land route to the city, the Soviets thought they could force the Allies to yield by starving the city’s noncombatant population. A confrontation with powerful Soviet ground forces was avoided by the success of the massive airlift, “a strategic victory of the first order.” #⁴⁹

Airpower can also be applied against warrior societies provided the strategic thinking that underlies it is complemented by a thorough understanding of the culture and the situation. In fact, airpower might have been more usefully employed in Somalia had this been the case.⁵⁰ Many Somalis were pastoral nomads driven into urban areas by the starvation produced by drought and civil war. #⁵¹ This migration destroyed the decentralized, elder-based social organization of their rural areas and forced Somali refugees to align themselves with one of the five major clans in the larger towns, especially Mogadishu. This process concentrated power into the hands of a few clan leaders and provided them with a large pool of desperate people completely dependent upon them for basic needs.

Beginning in August 1992, the U.S. military, organized as Joint Task Force (JTF) Provide Relief, airlifted food to various sites where C-130 transports could safely land.⁵²# Although this ended the famine in those locations, it did little to de-urbanize refugees wary of distancing themselves from their food source. Starting in December of 1992, a series of UN, and UN-supported, military operations sought to secure land routes to food distribution points. They were ultimately unsuccessful as U.S. and UN forces became tactically engaged against

the clan leaders and their citified cadres of fighters. In the aftermath of a disastrous October 1993 Ranger raid in Mogadishu, American forces withdrew and eventually UN forces followed.

How might strategic thinking have made things different in this confrontation with the very type of warrior society Ralph Peters describes? JTF Provide Relief commanders who, incidentally, were Marine Corps officers, wanted to expand the airlift effort to include airdrops into areas where C-130s could not land. While the effort to secure land routes would continue, this strategy would help stem the urbanization and encourage those already in the cities to return to their homes in outlying areas. This would diminish the power of the city-based clan leaders and assist in the restoration of the power that local elders traditionally held in less-populated areas. It was hoped that eventually the Somalis would be weaned from dependence upon relief supplies as the people regenerated indigenous food production with the end of the drought.

Such a strategy gets to the heart of the issue by supplying food directly to the people while at the same time creating pressure on the clan leaders to come to some agreement before their power base completely eroded. With agreement between the warlords, Somalia might have had a chance to start the long road to recovery. However, the strategy was never carried out in a significant way for two main reasons: 1) opposition by non-governmental organizations insistent upon control of and credit for relief operations; and 2) Air Force bureaucratic opposition related to airdrop procedures that placed unattainable demands on the proposal. This missed opportunity nonetheless suggests how a creative strategic plan might resolve situations involving violence-prone warrior societies.

Strategic military actions can, of course, involve the use of force. Airpower doctrine, as detailed in Colonel John Warden's masterpiece on air warfare,[#] calls for achieving victory by striking the enemy's vital core or "center of gravity."⁵³ This is "strategic" in that destruction of that center of gravity does not necessarily require the defeat of the enemy military forces or, for that matter, even attacking military forces at all. But how does the virtuous warrior do that if the enemy covers the relevant targets with innocent noncombatants? The fact that such targets might still be lawfully and ethically attacked (depending upon the results of proportionality analysis[#])⁵⁴ is not always helpful if doing so creates an adverse public reaction that undermines the mission. Unfortunately, such places are often precisely the ones that neo-absolutists ensure are filled with civilians. This is not an unsolvable problem, however.

The answer lies in supplementing strategic thinking with consideration of B.H. Liddell Hart's concept of the *indirect approach*.⁵⁵ This may require thinking somewhat counter-intuitive to the currently in-vogue concept of attacking fewer but more high-value targets with precision weapons. While an enemy's asymmetrical advantage may be his indifference to casualties *vis-à-vis* our sensitivity to them, the United States also enjoys asymmetrical advantages, not the least of which is its relative wealth.

Though the concept of "attrition warfare" is wildly unpopular among the Vietnam generation of military leaders, the application of overwhelming resources has been a hallmark of the American way of war this century.^{56#} In certain situations, perhaps like that of Iraq, it continues to have merit. While Saddam Hussein may be able to stock critical targets with noncombatants in the hopes of inducing high-visibility collateral losses, there are still thousands of lesser targets that are not—and could not be—shielded in that way. Although individually they may not be important, a *synergistic* effect can be obtained if sufficient numbers of them are destroyed. By nibbling around the margins, a "functional kill" might be thus obtained *indirectly* even though what is presumed to be the most important component remains untouched. True, this is a costly and time-consuming process, but it is an option that complicates and degrades the enemy's neo-absolutist strategy.

The indirect approach can also be effective if applied to exploit an adversary's fears. During the 1982 Malvinas/Falklands War, the British employed a Vulcan bomber to raid the Port Stanley airport. While the actual attack had little military consequence, the very use of the strategic weapon caused the Argentines, fearful that their capital was vulnerable, to divert key fighter assets to protect Buenos Aires. How would this work with a Saddam Hussein? However hostile he may be to the United States, what he and other Iraqis fear is Iran, the nation with whom they fought a bitter eight-year war in the 1980s. Thus, for example, instead of attacking targets in populous Baghdad where Hussein has his human shields, grinding away at his forces on the Iran border may more effectively pressure him because it creates a potential vulnerability that exploits his worst fears. By practically

foreclosing his opportunity to use human shields to produce collateral casualties, it also serves the interests of the virtuous warrior.

(c) Control your emotions and those of your troops.

It is perfectly understandable that even a virtuous warrior confronted with some atrocity will have a visceral reaction. This is especially true when the victims are fellow comrades-in-arms. It is critical in such situations, however, to avoid over-reacting. Part of controlling emotions under those circumstances is being able to distinguish between actions that have a bona fide *military* effect from those whose effect is primarily psychological and political. In the long run, savage behavior is usually unproductive in a purely *military* sense. During the Gulf War, for example, Iraq used Scud missiles as a terror weapon. Although there were some tragic losses, the military effect in terms of the overall campaign was, as General Schwarzkopf insists, virtually nil.^{#57}

What military impact the Scuds did have was not caused by their destructive power *per se*, but rather by the inefficient (and ultimately futile) diversion of resources they caused.^{#58} While that effort was designed to halt the launches, the lesson for military leaders is to carefully assess the military utility of a given response in comparison to the resources it absorbs. In any event, it is essential to suppress the human desire to exact immediate *retribution*, especially when doing so diverts energy from the main military mission. Whenever possible and prudent, postpone the necessary accounting for a time when time and resources are available for that important, but secondary task.

The threat of terrorism is a principal weapon of the neo-absolutist adversary. Terrorist threats cover a wide range of possibilities. The attack on United States Air Force personnel at Khobar Towers,^{#59} for example, was appalling, but even more horrifying is the specter of one employing weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Yet these too must be kept in perspective. Even a terrorist act involving WMD is not likely to actually defeat the United States. Martin Van Creveld has pointed out that terrorism has never succeeded in the West because the nature of modernity is that it provides redundancies that give advanced societies resiliency against the sort of sporadic attacks that terrorists carry out, even though individual incidents might be quite costly.^{#60} It does not appear that any entity short of a peer competitor (at least in a nuclear sense) could mount a sufficiently comprehensive attack to physically vanquish a nation like the United States.

This is not to denigrate the horrific potential of any act of terrorism, but rather to put it in context. Troops and the public need to understand that however terrible the act, the *military* impact is almost certainly much less than the psychological. Military leaders should, therefore, prepare both military forces and their citizenry to expect this kind of behavior and to expose it for what it is, a deliberate strategy designed to weaken U.S. will, create disruption, and erode discipline in the ranks.

It is essential that discipline be maintained in neo-absolutist conflicts. The My Lai massacre during the Vietnam War is an example of what can happen when American troops involved in a brutal war become undisciplined.^{#61} Do not dismiss My Lai as a freak anomaly limited to the Vietnam conflict. Sadly, atrocities seem to be an enduring feature of war. Stephen Ambrose notes that:

When you put young people, eighteen, nineteen, or twenty years old, in a foreign country with weapons in their hands, sometimes terrible things happen that you wish never happened. This is a reality that stretches across time and across continents. It is a universal aspect of war, from the time of the ancient Greeks up to the present.^{#62}

What is worrisome today is how emerging technologies might exacerbate the potential for indiscipline. Specifically, new communication capabilities are designed to substitute for various *in situ* command and supervisory levels. Furthermore, a revolutionary new battlefield strategy is under development called “infestation tactics.”^{#63} Employing advanced communications systems to coordinate large numbers of small infantry teams assaulting the same objective, the “most revolutionary aspect” of the new concept is that the infantryman does not rely on his personal weapon to engage the enemy, but will instead call in a wide range of deadly support fires.^{#64}

Quite obviously, whatever havoc troops were able to wreak with their personal weapons at places like My Lai, that awful potential will be greatly increased in the future, particularly where the command and supervisory structure that might intervene is, by design, less robust. The impact of technology is not just a concern for ground commanders. *Aviation Week & Space Technology* reports that senior American officials are worried about the effect of the absence of clear rules concerning information warfare.^{#65} They believe that “Once soldiers and airmen start dying in a war, the young computer-literate officers and enlisted men are going to start making their own efforts to crack enemy computer systems.”^{#66} Such free-lance efforts can create serious problems. For example, a computer virus loosed on an enemy might have “unintended consequences and come back and cripple friendly computers.”^{#67}

This latter point is significant because it illustrates how indiscipline can directly impact military operations. The impact on military operations is a vital teaching point for law of war training because it best impresses upon troops how the *military* effort will be undermined when violations occur. Surprisingly, this connection is seldom made. Lt Col David Grossman in his new book on the psychology of killing, observes that during none of the law of armed conflict training sessions that he attended during his career were the *military* repercussions of war crimes made clear to the troops.^{#68} He used as an example the stupidity of killing POWs. Doing so simply forces the enemy to fight desperately rather than surrender, and denies friendly forces the opportunity to gain valuable intelligence information.^{#69}

The commission of atrocities, at least by Western militaries, is plainly corrosive of military effectiveness. Historian Richard Overy notes that during World War II German soldiers on the Eastern front were told that they no longer had to follow the law of armed conflict in the war against the Soviets.^{#70} Whatever might have been the short term benefits of the legitimization of illicit acts, the “criminalization” of warfare proved disastrous over time. Overy explains:

The criminalization of warfare produced a growing indiscipline and demoralization among German forces themselves. The German army shot fifteen thousand of their own number, the equivalence of a whole division....Desertion or refusal to obey orders increased as the war went on, and the law of the jungle seeped into the military structure itself. The struggle for survival had a remorseless logic. The regime imposed ever more draconian terror on its own forces to keep them fighting until the very end of the war....^{#71}

Troops should be taught that no matter how provocative the enemy atrocity, yielding to the passion it evokes and committing an illegal act of vengeance only serves the adversary’s purposes. Although neo-absolutist societies may tolerate brutality committed by their forces, American society does not. Indeed, American public support can be eroded by the mere *perception* of violations of the law of war. Professors W. Michael Reisman and Chris T. Antoniou explain:

In modern popular democracies, even a limited armed conflict requires a substantial base of public support. That support can erode or even reverse itself rapidly, no matter how worthy the political objective, if people *believe* that the war is being conducted in an unfair, inhumane, or iniquitous way.

⁷² [emphasis added]

Thus, United States forces that violate the law of war do more than just dishonor themselves, they jeopardize the success of the entire military effort. In short, while the moral and ethical underpinnings of the law of war are obviously important, they must be matched by pragmatic, purely *military* rationales. These do, in fact, exist for virtually every aspect of the law of war. It behooves the virtuous warrior to emphasize such explanations during training because they are the ones that will most likely make sense to troops fighting to survive in the terror of combat. Likewise, it is wise to dispel the myth—and it really *is* a myth—that the law of war is an invention of lawyers and politicians. In truth, it was an innovation generated by warriors, for warriors.^{#73}

(d) *Be innovative.*

As discussed, technology is not a panacea for the problems of neo-absolutist war. Still, it would be a mistake to overlook its innovative potential. After all, analysts Ronald Haycock and Keith Neilson note that “technology has permitted the division of mankind into ruler and ruled.”⁷⁴ At any rate, technology is one of America’s principal asymmetrical advantages. And that technological advantage is manifest in the array of precision guided munitions (PGMs) that makes the U.S. arsenal second to none.

Joint Vision 2010 touts “precision engagement” as a means to “lessen risk to [United States] forces, and [to] minimize collateral damage.”⁷⁵ PGMs have the dual advantage in the context of neo-absolutist war. They reduce collateral damage and, because of their accuracy, they decrease the number of attackers required to go in harm’s way to strike a given target.⁷⁶ In short, unlike other high-tech armaments (*e.g.*, nuclear weapons) that provide military advantages but political liabilities, PGMs uniquely seem to offer both military efficiency and an unparalleled opportunity to seize the moral high ground so conducive to maintaining the necessary public support.

Other technologies offer advantages similar to those of PGMs. The advocates of “information operations”⁷⁷ and cyberwar⁷⁸ contend that twenty-first century conflicts can be fought virtually bloodlessly in cyberspace. In a cyberwar scenario depicted in a 1995 *Time* magazine article, a United States Army officer conjured up a future crisis where a technician ensconced at a computer terminal in the United States could derail a distant aggressor “without firing a shot” simply by manipulating computer and communications systems.⁷⁹ In a similar vein, the proponents of a growing plethora of “nonlethal”⁸⁰ technologies argue that a range of adversaries can be engaged without deadly effect.

Collectively, these innovative technologies, if properly applied, give American military leaders new tools to frustrate a neo-absolutist strategy because they allow the application of military power in a way that minimizes risk to friendly forces, noncombatants and, very often, the enemy forces themselves. All of this furthers the interest of the virtuous warrior to whom such considerations are important.

However, several cautions are in order. None of the new technologies can eliminate every hazard to noncombatants or, for that matter, anyone else. Quite obviously, even the most accurate PGM endangers a “human shield.” Additionally, most of the so called “non-lethal” technologies, items like rubber bullets, sticky foam, and so forth, are deadly to at least some persons.⁸¹ Even the relative harmlessness of the data manipulation suggested in the *Time* article can have fatal consequences to noncombatants reliant upon computer-dependent equipment. While these new systems do have the potential to lower the risk of casualties in particular situations, neither military leaders nor civilian decisionmakers should be seduced into thinking that technology permits engaging *any* adversary risk-free.⁸²

There are some potential uses that do show special promise of low lethality. High technology, and especially advanced information systems, might be most effective if it is geared towards countering the cult of personality intrinsic to the leadership cadre of many neo-absolutist groups. Critical to their hold on power is their ability to project and maintain an image of omnipotence. To counter that image, media expert Chuck De Caro recommends employing what he calls “softwar.” He defines softwar as the “hostile use of television to shape another nation’s will by changing its view of reality.”⁸³ Key to its utilization, he says, “is ripping an adversary’s control of communication away from him and then turning it against him so that he can have nothing but ignominious defeat.”

Ignominious defeat is defeat in which the vanquished becomes an object of ridicule, embarrassment, or revulsion to his former supporters. Imposing ignominious defeat on a adversary and his cohorts is often more desirable than actually killing them because it denies them the opportunity to perpetuate their legacy by becoming “glorious” martyrs. Consequently, softwar aimed at ignominious defeat is especially advantageous because it roots out the underlying power base and discourages those who might otherwise replenish the ranks—all of which increases the chances of a more lasting peace.

Seizing control of the enemy’s mass communications facilities in order to employ softwar might be accomplished, according to De Caro, by a combination of physical attacks and high-tech cyber subversion. Once

control is obtained, the populace can be fed either accurate information previously denied them, or altered information. In either case, the action serves to change the enemy citizenry's view of their erstwhile leaders.

How might a softwar plan involving *altered* information work? Thomas Czerwinski, then a professor at the School of Information Warfare of the National Defense University, postulated one scenario when he asked: "What would happen if you took Saddam Hussein's image, altered it, and projected it back to Iraq showing him voicing doubts about his own Baath Party?"⁸⁴ Clearly, the problems of internal control are multiplied. Anything that causes dissension or otherwise gnaws away at the control so necessary for neo-absolutist leaders is helpful to the virtuous warrior. Moreover, the systems needed to accomplish this are hardly science fiction.⁸⁵ The movie *Wag the Dog* depicted in a fictional setting the ability to manipulate public perception using today's technology.⁸⁶

Beyond waging softwar, ignominious defeat can be brought about by bringing malefactors to justice in a court of law. This is not always instinctive to even virtuous warriors. Following World War II President Roosevelt and Churchill initially wanted to summarily execute the Nazis leadership.⁸⁷ It was the savvy Soviets, however, who prevailed upon them to conduct the Nuremberg trials. The trials succeeded in documenting to the German people the full horror of Nazi evil. This proved to be an expurgating event, one which left relatively few vestiges of pro-Nazi sentiment in postwar Germany. Ignominious defeat was enhanced by the fact that the Nazis were not permitted to wear accoutered military uniforms, and several were forced to suffer the humiliation of execution by hanging instead of a soldier's death by firing squad.

Such punishments are not always necessary to impose ignominious defeat. In South Africa, for example, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is empowered to grant amnesty to those who confess their crimes and plead for forgiveness. It is the required process of supplication which achieves the ignominious defeat. The purpose of ignominious defeat, it must be emphasized, is to facilitate where feasible a fundamental psychological transformation of the neo-absolutist inclinations of the larger group. Again, lasting peace can only occur when the society waging neo-absolutist war undergoes seismic change.

Another technique using information innovatively that might further such a transformation was pioneered by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in the former Yugoslavia. There the ICRC developed a video to teach what was essentially the law of war to the warring parties. What differentiated this effort from more traditional programs is that rather than referring to the Geneva Conventions as such, the admonitions were characterized more generically as a "warrior's" responsibilities. Elsewhere, the ICRC has developed booklets for the Middle East in which provisions of the Geneva Conventions were "matched with bits of traditional Arab and Islamic wisdom."⁸⁸ Such culturally-specific efforts might be used overtly—or covertly—against the ranks of certain adversaries who might be resistant to anything perceived as being of Western origin. It should not be overlooked that a few of the adversaries practicing neo-absolutist strategies might actually be unaware of the laws of war. Ideally, the impetus for ignominious defeat would come from forces *internal* to the enemy society itself.

(e) Demonstrate commitment and resolve.

Dealing ignominious defeat to a neo-absolutist adversary by holding them accountable requires both commitment to the rule of law and the resolve to make the sacrifices necessary to see that it is honored. If that accountability must be imposed by *external* forces, this can involve danger to the enforcers. In Bosnia critics say that United States commanders have avoided the "hazardous task of arresting major war criminals" because they are "terrified of taking risks."⁸⁹ This risk aversion is a permutation of the previously discussed casualty aversion. While much of the impulse for casualty aversion is external to the military, much of it does originate from within the ranks—yet another vestige of the Vietnam War.⁹⁰ Many in uniform believe that lives were needlessly lost in the war in Southeast Asia and are determined to avoid putting military personnel at risk unless absolutely necessary.

This has led to conflicts with civilian policymakers, as illustrated by a much-reported episode between Madeline Albright, then ambassador to the UN, and General Colin Powell, who was Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff at the time. Frustrated over the military's reluctance to become involved in Bosnia, Ambassador Albright asked General Powell, "What is the point of having this superb military that you're always talking about if we

can't use it?"#91 Powell reported that he nearly had "an aneurysm," and explained to Ambassador Albright about the need for clear political goals before a military intervention. Powell (and others) have been roundly criticized in some quarters for reluctance to support the use of force in various circumstances.#92

Without question, military leaders should be wary of involvement in situations where troops are put in jeopardy. At the same time, however, it is imperative that the military avoid creating the perception that it is unwilling to undertake risky missions. The comments of columnist William Pfaff should be of concern to military professionals:

Congressional opinion *reinforces the military leadership's* reluctance in recent years to assign missions to American soldiers that involve serious risk to their lives....Dangerous missions have been left to the professionals of other countries....The American uniform is dishonored by this claim to privilege.#93

Moreover, it is interesting to note that Dr. Charles Moskos, the nation's foremost military sociologist, observes that casualty aversion did not arise until the advent of the all-volunteer force.#94 Uniformed professionals need to ask themselves whether the military's altruistic ethos is being replaced by an occupationalism that lays undue weight (perhaps unconsciously) on self-preservation over mission accomplishment. This tendency may be exacerbated by the treatment of Brig General Terry Schwalier. General Schwalier's promotion to major general was quashed following the bombing of Khobar Towers during his tour as commander. Schwalier was punished *not* because he failed to accomplish his mission of enforcing the no-fly zone in Southern Iraq, but rather because he had allegedly failed to take sufficient steps to protect his forces against terrorism.⁹⁵ Perceptions about this case have dangerous potential.

If military forces become obsessed with their own protection at the expense of mission accomplishment, they are in great danger of becoming "self-licking ice cream cones" with no hope of defeating neo-absolutist opponents. Neo-absolutists must be confronted with powerful military forces who relentlessly seek them out with a seeming indifference to their own fate. The qualities necessary to do so are not readily apparent in modern Western societies. In considering the war in Chechnya, a textbook neo-absolutist conflict, Professor Keegan contends:

[I]n truth, most people in Western societies make bad soldiers. More and more, the successful armies that survive...depend upon selectively recruited military units that cultivate a strong warrior spirit that is exclusive, proud and fierce. For regular armies, the difficulty will be to find enough individuals with warrior abilities—something that the Chechens imbibe with their mothers' milk.

The virtuous warrior must not allow a neo-absolutist enemy to doubt the resolve of U.S. forces or their willingness to put themselves in harm's way. In order to have the kind of military it needs for this new kind of warfare, military leaders should be unapologetic about the centrality of self-sacrifice to the American version of the warrior's code. Catch phrases like "people are our most important asset" too often are misconstrued into a notion that people are the first priority. They are not, and should never be. Successful mission accomplishment must always be the top priority. And this can—and will—frequently cost lives, perhaps many lives.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This short essay hardly begins to answer all the questions that will arise as military leaders confront adversaries who refuse to conform their conduct to accepted norms of international law and behavior. Moreover, it would be exceptionally unwise to underestimate the ability of opponents to continue to develop innovative asymmetrical methodologies to undermine our military efforts. In short, as Eisenhower implies, we should expect the unexpected.#96

In addressing the difficulties posed by the neo-absolutist opponent it is clear that there is no single, “silver bullet” solution to these very complex problems. What is required is a creative but reasoned and holistic analysis of all approaches. To stimulate imaginative responses to this new form of warfare, the wise commander will encourage an environment not merely tolerant of out-of-the-box thinking, but one that rewards it, even in those instances when a fresh approach is not as successful as hoped.

This essay has argued that ultimately war is a contest of wills. The challenge for the “virtuous warrior” is recognizing the elements of moral force that underlie a combatant’s will to continue a conflict. Those elements may vary from opponent to opponent, but the ones applicable to the U.S. will likely remain relatively unchanged. The fundamentals of our concept of a virtuous warrior reflect the basic humanitarian values of the American character and these are immutable.

Unquestionably, the virtuous warrior in future conflicts may find himself or herself under tremendous pressure to compromise those values. Goaded perhaps by the impact of a horrendous atrocity there is a temptation to embrace the 18th century German concept of *Kriegsraison*. It asserts that military necessity of sufficient weight justifies any action, including violations of the law of war, especially if they will shorten the conflict.^{#97} In reality, this flawed end-justifies-the-means type of thinking is little different than that embraced by adherents of neo-absolutist war. It invites a descent into savagery and brutality that will sustain an endless cycle of violence that makes the restoration of real peace virtually impossible. Similarly, the wrongheaded, “we must burn the village in order to save it,” mentality that emerges from such thinking is extremely counterproductive and self-defeating in the context of American culture—as is evident from the collapse of public support for the Vietnam War following revelations of such conduct.

What this paper has tried to demonstrate is that it is possible to successfully confront evil without becoming evil. Indeed, the virtuous warrior should understand that honoring the precepts of chivalrous and humane warfare in the face of the contrary behavior provides him or her with a potent weapon. In his examination of World War II Professor Overy observes that the Allies “belief that they fought on the side of righteousness equipped them with powerful moral armament,” and that became one of the main reasons for their victory. The power of that idea is no less true today.

Virtuous warriors should, in fact, *promote* their compliance with legal and ethical norms as a *strength* of their warfighting strategy. The moral high ground obtained by doing so pays many dividends. For their part, adversaries weighing a neo-absolutist strategy ought to understand that inhumane behavior offends American sensibilities in a unique way. Other cultures may view neo-absolutist strategies as just another way of waging war, but Americans consider them and those that use them as evil and, perhaps even worse, cowardly. American attitudes towards those they perceive as evil and cowardly are harsh and unforgiving, as the whopping public support for the death penalty amply demonstrates.

Without doubt, waging neo-absolutist war against the United States—requiring as it does a near perfect understanding of the complexities of American popular opinion—is an exquisitely perilous enterprise. The consequences of miscalculation are enormous, as American power has terrifying possibilities. Once aroused, it can be chillingly effective and sensationally devastating; there are few things more dangerous than a provoked America. It is not without irony that it may be the virtuous warrior’s last responsibility in some future conflict to ensure that even a vanquished “Genghis Khan” and whatever remains of his clan receives treatment that honors this nation’s highest ideals.

Men who take up arms against one another in public war do not cease to be moral beings, responsible to one another and to God.

Instructions for the Armies of the United States
General Order No. 100, April 24, 1863

Notes

1. The author has discussed elements of this essay in previous papers including, *Asymmetrical Warfare and the Western Mindset*, presented on Nov. 20, 1997 in Cambridge, MA, to *The Role of Naval Forces in 21st Century Operations* conference sponsored by the Fletcher School of Law & Diplomacy at Tufts University, the Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis, the Commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps, and the Chief of Naval Operations, U.S. Navy; *Technology and the Twenty-first Century Battlefield: Re-complicating Moral Life for the Statesman and the Soldier*, presented on Feb. 6, 1998 in Annapolis, MD, to the Ethics and the Future of Conflict Working Group meeting sponsored by the Carnegie Council on Ethics and International Affairs; *Organizational Change and the New Technologies of War*, presented on Jan. 30, 1998 to the Joint Services Conference on Professional Ethics, at the National Defense University, Ft McNair, Washington, D.C., and *21st-Century Land Warfare: Four Dangerous Myths*, PARAMETERS, Autumn 1997, at 27.

2. As quoted by STEPHEN E. AMBROSE, AMERICANS AT WAR (1997), at 195.

#3. Sir Galahad, Sir Lancelot's son in Arthurian literature, is considered to represent the ideal of knightly chivalry. In SIR THOMAS MALORY'S LE MORTE D'ARTHUR, a sword that legend held could be removed only by the best knight in the world was freed by Sir Galahad.

4. See, e.g., CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF, JOINT VISION 2010 (1996), WILLIAM S. COHEN, REPORT OF THE QUADRENNIAL DEFENSE REVIEW, (1997), and CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF, NATIONAL MILITARY STRATEGY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA (1997).

#5. Other authorities define asymmetrical warfare somewhat differently. For example, in its unclassified report on the exercise Strategic Force '96, the Air Force discussed the issue as follows:

The symmetrical battles have classically pitted steel against steel in slow wars of attrition. Asymmetrical warfare departs from this thinking. Asymmetrical warfare avoids traditional force-on-force battles. Asymmetrical warfare favors pitting your strength against an enemy's strength or weakness in a nontraditional and sometimes unconventional manner.

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE, STRATEGIC FORCE (1997), at 8.

6. Geoffrey Parker, *The Future of Western Warfare*, CAMBRIDGE ILLUSTRATED HISTORY OF WARFARE 369 (Geoffrey Parker, ed., 1995).

7. JOINT VISION 2010 *supra* note 4, at ii.

8. *Id.* at 10-11.

9. See, e.g., *Id.*, at 11 (information technologies); QUADRENNIAL DEFENSE REVIEW, *supra* note 4, at 4 (NBC [nuclear, biological, and chemical] threats, information warfare); and the NATIONAL MILITARY STRATEGY, *supra* note 4, at 9 (WMD and information warfare).

10. ALLAN R. MILLETT AND PETER MASLOWSKI, FOR THE COMMON DEFENSE XII (2d ed., 1994). General George S. Patton, Jr.'s comments typify the classic American view:

The Americans, as a race, are the foremost mechanics of the world--It therefore behooves us to devise methods of war which exploit our inherent superiority. We must fight the war by machines on the ground, and in the air, to the maximum of our ability....

As quoted by Colin S. Gray, *U.S. Strategic Culture: Implications for Defense Technology*, DEFENSE TECHNOLOGY (Asa A. Clark IV and John F. Lilley eds., 1989), at 31, citing GEORGE S. PATTON, JR., WAR AS I KNEW IT 345 (1947; Bantam reprint 1980).

11. JOINT VISION 2010, *supra* note 4, at 1.

12. For a discussions of “the revolution in military affairs” in the information age *see generally*, *Select Enemy. Delete.*, THE ECONOMIST, March 8, 1997, at 21; Eliot A. Cohen, *A Revolution in Warfare*, FOREIGN AFFAIRS, March/April 1996, at 37; Andrew F. Krepinevich, *Cavalry to Computers: The Pattern of Military Revolutions*, THE NATIONAL INTEREST, Fall 1994, at 30; and James R. Fitzsimonds and Jan M. Van Tol, *Revolutions in Military Affairs*, JOINT FORCE QUARTERLY, Spring 1994, at 24.
13. *See*, Robert N. Ellithorpe, *Warfare in Transition? American Military Culture Prepares for the Information Age*, a presentation for the Biennial International Conference of the Inter-University Seminar on Armed Forces and Society, Baltimore, MD, October 24-26, 1997, at 18 (“American military culture historically emphasized scientific approaches to warfare to the point of holding an almost mystical belief in the power of technology to solve the challenges of war.”) (Unpublished paper on file with author).
14. ROBERT POOLE, *BEYOND ENGINEERING* 209 (1997).
15. Lt General Paul K. Van Riper, *Information Superiority*, MARINE CORPS GAZETTE, June 1997, at 54, 62.
- #16. John Childs, *Genghis Khan*, THE DICTIONARY OF MILITARY HISTORY 305 (Andre Corvisier, ed., English ed., rev. 1994).
17. *See* JOHN KEEGAN, *A HISTORY OF WARFARE* (1993). Harry Summers maintains that Keegan makes a false distinction between “politics” and “culture.” *See* COLONEL HARRY G. SUMMERS, JR., USA (RET.), *THE NEW WORLD ORDER* 40-42 (1995).
18. Huntington’s original thesis (first published in 1993), together with thoughtful critiques have been published. *See* Council on Foreign Relations, *The Clash of Civilizations? The Debate* (1996). Huntington has expanded his thesis to a book-length treatise entitled *THE CLASH OF CIVILIZATIONS AND THE REMAKING OF WORLD ORDER* (1996).
19. Lt General Li Jijun, *Traditional Military Thinking and the Defensive Strategy of China*, LETORT PAPER NO. 1, U.S. ARMY WAR COLLEGE, STRATEGIC STUDIES INSTITUTE (Earl Tilford ed., Aug. 29, 1997), at 1.
- #20. Ralph Peters, *The New Warrior Class*, PARAMETERS, Summer 1994, at 24.
21. John Keegan, *The Warrior’s Code of No Surrender*, U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT, Jan. 23, 1995, at 47.
- #22. MICHAEL IGNATIEFF, *THE WARRIOR’S HONOR* 116-117 (1997).
23. *Id.* at 117.
- #24. *Id.* at 6.
25. Dan Cordtz, *War in the 21st Century: The Streetfighter State*, FINANCIAL WORLD, Aug. 29, 1995, at 42 (discussing “[w]ill the U.S. be ready to fight enemies who don’t play by the traditional rules?”).
26. *Id.*
27. *As quoted by* James Kittfield, in *The Air Force Wants to Spread Its Wings*, NATIONAL JOURNAL, Nov. 8, 1997, at 2264.
28. *As quoted in* *How North Vietnam Won the War*, THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, Aug. 3, 1995, at A8.
29. *See generally*, Thomas L. Friedman, “No-Dead War” Poses Problem for U.S., OMAHA WORLD-HERALD, Aug. 25, 1995, at 24, and Chris Black, *US Options Seem Fewer as Military Avoids Risk*, BOSTON GLOBE, July 23, 1995, at 12. This trend has led Edward Luttwak to argue that an even greater investment in technology is required because modern democracies simply cannot tolerate casualties. *See* Edward Luttwak, *Post-Heroic Armies*, FOREIGN AFFAIRS, July/Aug. 1996, at 33.

30. Somali casualties were estimated to be in “the hundreds.” See James L. Woods, *U.S. Decisionmaking During Operations in Somalia*, LEARNING FROM SOMALIA (Walter Clarke and Jeffrey Herbst, eds., 1997), at 164.

31. Douglas Waller, a Time Magazine correspondent observes:

The same technology that is revolutionizing the way the Pentagon fights wars is also changing the way the media covers them. The media can now provide viewers, listeners and even readers almost instant access to a battlefield. With lighter video cameras, smaller portable computers, cellular phones, their own aircraft, and worldwide electronic linkups, the media can report on any battlefield no matter how remote and no matter how many restrictions the Defense Department tries to place on coverage.

Douglas Waller, *Public Affairs, the Media, and War in the Information Age*, a presentation for the War in the Information Age Conference, Tufts University, Nov. 15-16, 1995 (unpublished paper on file with author).

32. WALTER J. BOYNE, *BEYOND THE WILD BLUE: A HISTORY OF THE AIR FORCE 1947-1997* 7 (1997).

33. *Id.*

34. See MICHAEL R. GORDON AND BERNARD E. TRAINOR, *THE GENERAL’S WAR: THE INSIDE STORY OF CONFLICT IN THE GULF* 324-326 (1996).

35.# U.S. AIR FORCE PAMPHLET (AFP) 110-31, *INTERNATIONAL LAW–THE CONDUCT OF ARMED CONFLICT AND AIR OPERATIONS* (1976) provides as follows:

The term noncombatant includes a wide variety of disparate persons...civilians (who are not otherwise lawful or unlawful combatants, combatants who are hors de combat (PWs and wounded and sick), members of the armed forces enjoying special status (chaplains and medics), and civilians accompanying the armed forces.

Id., paragraph 3-4.

36. JOINT VISION 2010, *supra* note 4, at 28 and 34.

37. See Lt Col Thomas X. Hammes, *Don’t Look Back, They’re Not Behind You*, THE MARINE CORPS GAZETTE, May 1996, at 72, 73 (discussing the military implications of chaining hostages to targets). Hostage taking was not clearly prohibited until after World War II. See H. Wayne Elliot, Lt Col, USA (Ret.), *Hostages or Prisoners of War: War Crimes at Dinner*, 149 MIL. L. REV. 241 (Summer 1995).

38. See Stephen Erlanger, *Russia Allows Rebels to Leave with Hostages*, NEW YORK TIMES, June 20, 1995, at 1.

39. See *Libyans to Form Shield at Suspected Arms Plant*, BALTIMORE SUN, May 17, 1996, at 14.

40. See Barbara Slavín, *Iraq Leaves U.S. Few Options*, USA TODAY, Nov. 14, 1997, at 13A.

#41. JAMES F. DUNNIGAN, *DIGITAL SOLDIERS: THE EVOLUTION OF HIGH-TECH WEAPONRY AND TOMORROW’S BRAVE NEW BATTLEFIELD* 219 (1996).

42. See, e.g., Charles J. Dunlap, Jr., *How We Lost the High-Tech War of 2007*, THE WEEKLY STANDARD, Jan. 29, 1996, at 22.

43. James E. Kinzer and Marybeth Peterson Ulrich, *Political-Military Affairs Officers and the Air Force: Continued Turbulence in a Vital career Specialty*, INSTITUTE FOR NATIONAL SECURITY STUDIES, OCCASIONAL PAPER 13, April 1997, at 35.

44. Edward L. Rowney, *Tough Times, Tougher Talk*, AMERICAN LEGION MAGAZINE, May 1997, at 24, 25-26.

45. H.R. MCMASTER, *DERELICTION OF DUTY* 327 (1997) [emphasis added].

46. See JOHN L. HIRSCH AND ROBERT B. OAKLEY, *SOMALIA AND OPERATION RESTORE HOPE* 120 (1995).
- #47. Carl H. Builder, *Keeping the Strategic Flame*, *JOINT FORCE QUARTERLY*, Winter 1996-97, at 76.
- 48.# *Id.* at 77-78.
49. COLONEL PHILLIP S. MEILINGER, USAF, *10 PROPOSITIONS REGARDS AIRPOWER* 13 (1995).
- 50.# See generally, HIRSCH AND OAKLEY, *supra*, note 46, at 3-16. Cf. *SOMALIA: A COUNTRY STUDY* (Harold D. Nelson ed., 1981) and *LEARNING FROM SOMALIA* (Walter C. Clarke and Jeffrey Herbst eds., 1997), at 85.
51. Andrew S. Natsios, *Humanitarian Relief Intervention in Somalia*.
52. The author served as the Staff Judge Advocate and Plans and Policy Officer for Joint Task Force Provide Relief from November 1992 through January 1993.
53. COLONEL JOHN A. WARDEN, II, USAF (RET.), *THE AIR CAMPAIGN* (1989).
54. Essentially, the concept of proportionality requires commanders to refrain from attacks when it “may be expected to cause incidental loss of civilian life, injury to civilians, damage to civilian objects or combination thereof, which would be excessive in relation to the direct and concrete military advantage anticipated.” See AFP 110-31, *supra* note 35, at paragraph 5-3c(1)(b)(I)(c).
- #55. B.H. LIDDELL HART, *STRATEGY* (1991).
56. See, e.g., JOHN ELLIS, *BRUTE FORCE* (1990).
- #57. H. NORMAN SCHWARZKOPF, *IT DOESN’T TAKE A HERO* 417-419 (1992).
58. In essence, Saddam is practicing his own version of an indirect strategic approach.
59. Nineteen airmen were killed and scores injured by the blast, the perpetrators of which are still not yet publicly identified. The most comprehensive public study (albeit opinionated) is the report by journalist Matt Labash. See Matt Labash, *The Scapegoat*, *THE WEEKLY STANDARD*, Nov. 24, 1997, at 20.
60. MARTIN VAN CREVELD, *TECHNOLOGY AND WAR* 307-308 (Rev. Ed., 1991).
61. See generally, MICHAEL WALZER, *JUST AND UNJUST WARS* 309-316 (1977).
62. STEPHEN E. AMBROSE, *AMERICANS AT WAR* 152 (1997).
63. See Captain Michael R. Lwin, USA, and Captain Mark R. Lwin, USMC, *The Future of Land Power*, U.S. NAVAL INSTITUTE PROCEEDINGS, Sept. 1997, at 82, 83.
64. *Id.*
65. David A. Fulgham, *Computer Combat Rules Frustrate the Pentagon*, *AVIATION WEEK & SPACE TECHNOLOGY*, Sept. 15, 1997, at 67.
66. *Id.*
67. See Pat Cooper and Frank Oliveri, *Air Force Carves Operational Edge In Info Warfare*, *DEFENSE NEWS*, Aug. 21-27, 1995.

68. LT COL DAVE GROSSMAN, ON KILLING: THE PSYCHOLOGICAL COST OF LEARNING TO KILL IN WAR AND SOCIETY 203-205 (1996).

#69. *Id.*

70. RICHARD OVERY, WHY THE ALLIES WON 302-305 (1st Am. ed., 1996).

#71. *Id.* at 304.

72. W. MICHAEL REISMAN AND CHRIS T. ANTONIOU, THE LAWS OF WAR xxiv (1994).

73. *See, e.g.*, Major Scott R. Morris, *USA The Laws of War: Rules by Warriors for Warriors*, THE ARMY LAWYER, Dec. 1997, at 4.

74. RONALD HAYCOCK AND KEITH NEILSON, MEN, MACHINES, AND WAR xii (1988).

75. JOINT VISION 2010, *supra* note 4, at 21.

76. Benjamin S. Lambeth argues:

[P]ossibly the single greatest impact of the technology revolution on airpower and its effectiveness relative to other force components is its capacity to save lives through the use of precision attack to minimize noncombatant and friendly fatalities by the substitution of technology for manpower and the creation of battlefield conditions in which land elements, once unleashed, can more readily do their jobs because of the degraded capabilities of enemy forces.

Benjamin S. Lambeth, *Technology and Air War*, AIR FORCE MAGAZINE, Nov. 1996, at 50, 53. *See also* Lt Col Edward Mann, *One Target, One Bomb*, MILITARY REVIEW, Sept. 1993, at 33; *contra see, e.g.*, Sean D. Naylor, *General: Technology is No Substitute for Troops*, AIR FORCE TIMES, Mar. 3, 1997, at 26 (*citing* remarks by General John Sheehan, USMC, then Commander-in Chief of U.S. Atlantic Command).

77. There are many possible definitions of information operations but a common official definition is that used by the Air Force, that is, “actions taken to gain, exploit, defend, or attack information and information systems.” AIR FORCE DOCTRINE DOCUMENT 1, AIR FORCE BASIC DOCTRINE, Sept. 1997, at 44 [hereinafter AFDD-1]. This definition is almost identical to that once used by the Air Force to describe information warfare. *See* Captain Robert G. Hanseman, USAF, *The Realities and Legalities of Information Warfare*, 42 A.F. L. REV. 173, 176 (1997), *citing* USAF Fact Sheet 95-20 (Nov. 1995).

78. Cyberwar suggests a form of warfare more holistic, strategic, and manipulative of information in its concept than the “information operations” definition set forth in note 77 *supra*. AFDD-1 notes the following:

In describing information operations, it is important to differentiate between “information in war” and “information warfare.” The second element, information warfare, involves such diverse activities as psychological warfare, military deception, electronic combat, and both physical and cyber attack.

AFDD-1, *Id.* For an excellent cyberwar scenario, *see* John Arquilla, *The Great Cyberwar of 2002*, WIRED, Feb. 1998, at 122.

79. He visualized the foe’s phone system brought down by a computer virus, logic bombs ravaging the transportation network, false orders confusing the adversary’s military, the opponent’s television broadcasts jammed with propaganda messages, and the enemy leader’s bank account electronically zeroed out. All of this is expected to cause the adversary to give up. *See* Douglas Waller, *Onward Cyber Soldiers*, TIME, Aug. 21, 1995, at 38.

#80. The Department of Defense defines these weapons as follows:

Weapons that are explicitly designed and primarily employed so as to incapacitate personnel or material, while minimizing fatalities, permanent injury to personnel, and undesired damage to property and the environment. Unlike conventional lethal weapons that destroy their targets principally through blast, penetration and fragmentation, non-lethal weapons employ means other than gross physical destruction to prevent the target from functioning. Non-lethal weapons are intended to have one, or both, of the following characteristics: a. they have relatively reversible effects on personnel or material, b. they affect objects differently within their area of influence.

NONLETHAL WEAPONS: TERMS AND REFERENCES, USAF Institute for National Security Studies, Colorado Springs, CO, (Robert J. Bunker ed., July 1997), at ix *citing* Department of Defense Directive 3000.3, *Policy for Non-Lethal Weapons*, July 9, 1996.

81. Larry Lynn, Director, U.S. Department of Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, says that “there is no such thing as nonlethal of course.” *See One on One*, DEFENSE NEWS, Feb. 19-25, 1996, at 30.

82. *See also* Thomas E. Ricks, *Gingrich’s Futuristic Vision for Re-Shaping the Armed Forces Worry Military Professionals*, WALL STREET JOURNAL, Feb. 8, 1995, at 16 (contending that “many of the supporters of the military who lack firsthand experience—believe that gadgets can somehow substitute for the blood and sweat of ground combat.”)

83. E-mail to the author dated Feb. 20, 1998.

#84. *As quoted by* Peter Grier, *Information Warfare*, AIR FORCE MAGAZINE, Mar. 1995, at 35.

85. *See* Dennis Brack, *Do Photos Lie?*, PROCEEDINGS, Aug. 1996, at 47.

86. In the fictionalized story in the movie *Wag the Dog* (1997) a Hollywood movie producer was retained to create a “war” via the manipulation of images and pass it off as an actual event.

87. *See* Joseph E. Persico, NUREMBERG: INFAMY ON TRIAL 8 (1994).

88. *See* Ignatieff, *supra* note 22.

89. William Drozdiak, *Passivity Tempers U.S. Progress in Bosnia*, WASHINGTON POST, Dec. 21, 1997, at 1.

90. *See* note 29, *supra*, and accompanying text.

#91. *As quoted by* Colin Powell, MY AMERICAN JOURNEY 576 (with Joseph E. Persico, 1995). Powell reported his response:

I thought I would have an aneurysm. American GIs were not toy soldiers to be moved around on some sort of global game board. I patiently explained that we had used our armed forces more than two dozen times in the preceding three years for war, peacekeeping, disaster relief, and humanitarian assistance. But in every one of those cases we had had a clear goal and had matched our military commitment to the goal. I told Ambassador Albright that the U.S. military would carry out any mission it was handed, but my advice would always be that the tough political goals had to be set first. Then we would accomplish the mission.

Id. at 576-577.

92. *See, e.g.,* Richard H. Kohn, *Out of Control: The Crisis in Civil-Military Relations*, THE NATIONAL INTEREST, Spring 1994, at 3.

93. William Pfaff, *America’s Peace Strategy Lets Others Pay the Price*, BALTIMORE SUN, July 17, 1997, at 11.

94. Conversation with the author, Oct. 1997, Baltimore, MD.

95. *See* note 59 *supra*.

96. *See* note 2, *supra*, and accompanying text.

97. *See* AFP 110-31, *supra* note 35, at paragraph 1-3a(1).